

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated July 23, 2004. Claims 1, 5, 7-12, 16, and 18-22 are pending in this application. Non-elected Claims 2-4, 6, 13-15, and 17 have been withdrawn from consideration. Applicants note, however, that upon the allowance of a generic claim, Applicants will seek rejoinder of claims directed to the species within that genus. Claims 1, 5, 6, 8, 12, 16-18, 19, and 22 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. Claims 1 and 12 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

The Office Action rejected Claims 1, 5, 7-12, 16, and 18-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,473,351 (Helterline et al.). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Applicants submit that amended independent Claims 1 and 12, together with the remaining claims dependent thereon, are patentably distinct from Helterline et al. at least for the following reasons.

The aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 1 is an image processing apparatus that performs image processing for generating image data to be used for printing by a printing means. The apparatus includes a retaining means for retaining density correction data for each of a plurality of printing conditions between which density appears differently in the printing, the printing conditions being conditions according to which the printing means performs printing. The judging means judges the printing condition when performing image processing and the density correction means performs density correction on the image data using the density correction data corresponding to the printing condition judged by the judging means, among the density correction data retained by the retaining means.

Among other important features of Claim 1 is that density correction data is retained for each of a plurality of printing conditions, and density correction on the image data is performed using the density correction data corresponding to the judged printing condition. In the apparatus having the features recited in Claim 1, the printing conditions are conditions according to which the printing means performs printing.

Helterline et al., as understood by Applicants, relates to a method and apparatus for regulating print density in an ink-jet printer. Applicants submit that Helterline et al. discusses that dot sizes and a width of a printed line are changed according to the kind of print paper used, environmental temperature, and humidity. When the size of dot is changed, a resolution of the printed image is changed. Therefore, Helterline et al. detects the width of the printed line and adjusts the density of printed dots. Fig. 1 of Helterline et al. shows that an optical sensor 18 detects lines 14, 16 printed on a print paper 12. In Fig. 1, the lines 14, 16 are solid lines made up of a plurality of arranged dots. The widths of these lines are changed by various conditions as stated above. Moreover, Helterline et al. adjusts energy applied on resistor elements for ink ejection and adjust the volume of ejected ink so that the width of printed line is kept to a predetermined one. Applicants submit, however, that nothing has been found in Helterline et al. that would teach or suggest the feature of the retaining means, where the printing conditions are conditions according to which the printing means performs printing.

Accordingly, at least for this reason, Applicants submit that Claim 1 is patentable over Helterline et al.

Independent Claim 12 is a method claim that corresponds to apparatus Claim 1, and is believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 1.

The other rejected claims in this application depend from independent Claims 1 or 12 discussed above, and, therefore, are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual reconsideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and the allowance of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,


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